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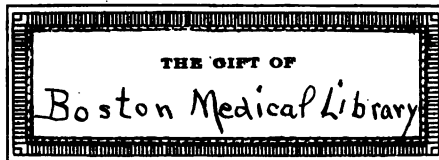
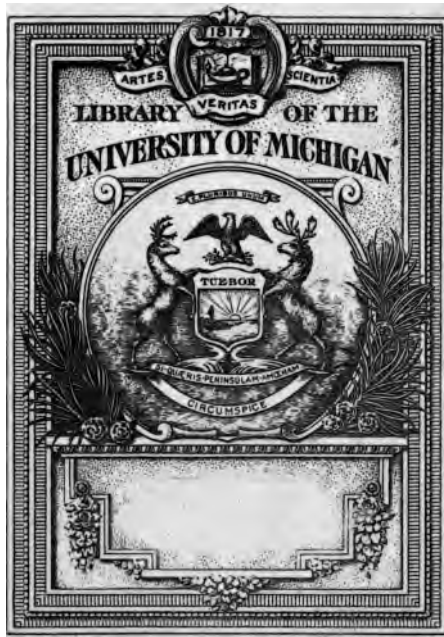
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DEDICATION
OF THE NEW BUILDING OF THE
BOSTON MEDICAL LIBRARY
SATURDAY JAN. 12TH AT 8 P.M. 1901



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DEDICATION

OF THE

NEW BUILDING

OF THE

Boston Medical Library

8 THE FENWAY

Saturday, January 12, 1901



ORDER OF EXERCISES

ADDRESSES BY THE PRESIDENT, DR. DAVID W. CHEEVER

AND THE LIBRARIAN, DR. JAMES R. CHADWICK

REMARKS BY

DR. FRANCIS W. DRAPER, PRESIDENT OF
THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

DR. WILLIAM OSLER, PROFESSOR OF MED-
ICINE, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, BAL-
TIMORE, MD.

DR. JOHN S. BILLINGS, LIBRARIAN OF THE
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

DR. HORATIO C. WOOD, PROFESSOR OF
THERAPEUTICS AND CLINICAL PROFESSOR
OF NERVOUS DISEASES, UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA.

DR. HENRY P. WALCOTT, ACTING PRESI-
DENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAM-
BRIDGE.

BOSTON

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1901

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ADDRESSES.

ADDRESS BY DAVID W. CHEEVER, M.D., LL.D.,

President of the Boston Medical Library.

MEMBERS OF THE BOSTON MEDICAL LIBRARY, OUR INVITED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :— By the liberality of many citizens, women as well as men, whose gifts we gratefully acknowledge, and by the free offerings of our professional brethren, we have erected this commodious and safe depository for our medical library. It is with a peculiar feeling of thankfulness that I officially welcome here the physicians of Boston and of New England. The object for which we have striven is so vital to our welfare that a certain solemnity is appropriately mingled with our gratitude. Over and over again, in these later years of financial prosperity, have we seen vast schemes of benevolence, of religion and of education begun and finished promptly by the munificence of a single wealthy citizen. Such has not been our good fortune. We have received but one large gift and that from a lady who wishes to remain unknown.

"Inter tedia et labores," literally, have the doctors toiled to make this library and to give it a safe and suitable building. Our librarian will detail to you, as he alone can do, the long years of effort by which he has raised this to the fourth place among the medical libraries of this country.

It is my simple duty to welcome you here, and to recount, briefly, the importance and the advantages of our work.

A medical library is peculiar in that it must also be a contemporary and a periodical library. The present is even more valuable to it than the past, although the records of the past are inestimable. It has been well said that the burning of the library of Alexandria set civilization back through all the

centuries of the Middle Ages. So, were all records of medicine blotted out, the next generation of doctors would begin as children over again. What has been discovered has been recorded, and were that lost, humanity would be reduced to the rough medical practice of the savage. It is impossible to set a money value on medical science, and without the records of science, there would be no medical art. Were anatomy, physiology and pathology lost, we should be groping in the first footsteps of ignorance. Were the history of all diseases, recorded in our books, destroyed, we should be only children as observers. But to the younger doctors who listen to me it will appear that the present is all important. And if we were suddenly deprived of the knowledge acquired in the last fifty, twenty, or even ten years, what a change would come over medicine! Anesthesia, antisepsis and bacteriology are now the paramount factors of all our progress. And the peculiarity of this species of knowledge is that it is ephemeral; it lives but a day; it is not lost, but its seeds germinate in new discoveries the next day. What we know today may be obsolete tomorrow, simply because it is subject to daily investigation and daily modification.

This form of knowledge requires an ephemeral literature to record it. The monthly, the weekly periodicals supply this knowledge. Hence the importance of a periodical library in medicine. More than five hundred such publications are taken here; read here; preserved here in files. This, then, constitutes a most valuable part of our library.

To allow the busy doctor and the student an opportunity to use this knowledge, it must be rendered accessible in commodious and quiet rooms, for reading, writing, excerpting. In our fine halls we can now offer the wisdom of the older authors, and the discoveries of almost every hospital and clinic and school in the world. Special subjects can be searched and exhausted; and the hurried doctor can drop in for half an hour and find the facts he is in search of, speedily and surely.

This is not all our function. A meeting house for physicians is also here provided; a medical centre, where professional intercourse will be aided by social features also.

I believe that the future influence of this Boston Medical Library on

the doctors of New England will be beyond computation, in advancing science, softening prejudices and modifying opinions.

In 1874 six physicians met in the office of the late Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, and laid the foundation of this library association. Three of these gentlemen still serve us: Dr. F. I. Knight, as vice president; Dr. O. F. Wadsworth, as clerk; Dr. James R. Chadwick, as librarian. We may fittingly recall, also, that our assistant librarian, Dr. Edwin H. Brigham, is still in charge; having faithfully filled that office since 1875. Mrs. Collins, our cataloguer, has served us well for twenty-two years. Such permanence and reliability have been great helps in our progress. In 1877 an act of incorporation was obtained. Twelve of the fourteen original incorporators survive. We have lost three presidents by death: Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, presiding from 1875 to 1888; Dr. Hodges, presiding from 1888 to 1890; Dr. Minot, presiding from 1890 to 1896.

A quarter of a century has elapsed, and we have moved from Hamilton Place to Boylston Place, and thence, here. In this chaste and appropriate edifice we now are domiciled. That it is so well constructed we owe to the good taste of the architects, Messrs. Shaw & Hunnewell, aided by the suggestions and the oversight of our building committee, Drs. J. Collins Warren, J. R. Chadwick, Farrar C. Cobb. It is a noteworthy fact that we have completed our building for less than the estimated cost. This is unusual; and we owe it largely to the prudent management and practical knowledge of Dr. Farrar Cobb, whose experience in building a large hospital has well served him and us.

The young men in our ranks have pushed us on, and furnished that spur of enthusiasm which conservative age sometimes lacks. We owe also much of our financial success to the tact of our committee to solicit subscriptions, of which Dr. John Homans, 2d, is chairman. I consider that we have made a financial success, because we have collected by subscription about \$73,000.

We have paid out \$125,000; and \$15,000 will complete our building and furnishing; thus bringing the total cost up to rising \$140,000. Sixty-seven thousand dollars are still due; but we have \$25,000 to meet this, in

land we own, unsold, leaving a balance of debt of \$42,000. We have mortgaged this library, building and land, for \$50,000.

Our younger members have generously guaranteed the interest on \$25,000 for five years. And this leaves us a yearly burden of interest of about \$1,000. We are not so badly off then. Fifty thousand dollars would clear us of debt.

But looking forward to the future we need an endowment to buy books. Many physicians have given us their libraries; others will do so as time goes on. But we need modern contemporary books. We ought to have on our shelves every modern treatise and textbook, in English, French or German, as soon as published; medical students and doctors alike need this. We need a fund with a yearly income to enable us to receive students freely; to give them a room to themselves. We want students to come here as well as doctors, and we want to be able to give them good facilities for study.

Our hall for business meetings has been beautifully fitted up in memory of Dr. Richard Sprague, by his mother and by the Hon. C. F. Sprague. Mrs. Fifield, the widow of our late genial associate, has furnished a room, as a memorial. Holmes Hall speaks for itself. I need not describe its excellence. Would that some one might decorate and furnish the hall we occupy this evening. From the walls of Holmes Hall, from other rooms, look down upon us the portraits of many of our medical forefathers and teachers: The Warrens, Bigelows, Jacksons, Homans, Shattucks, Wymans, Bowditchs, Cabots, Putnams, Storer, Ellis, Buckingham, Holmes! How can I cease the enumeration? These were scholarly doctors. We need to continue this patrician *Gens*. Science enlightens, but does not wholly satisfy; the humanities in education soften manners, nor allow them to be harsh.

The moral effect produced on the patient and the community by the learned, as well as gentlemanly, physician, is great and wholesome. Let the doctor cultivate books, and let the influence of this library help him to do so.

It is now my privilege to introduce to you our librarian. If any one man were named who had collected and created our library, it is he. He is a bibliophile, who travels over Europe with a list of missing numbers always in his pockets. Persistent as the bee, he never comes home without honey.

ADDRESS BY JAMES R. CHADWICK, M.D.,

Librarian of the Boston Medical Library.

"*Horæ periunt et imputantur.*" "The hours perish and you must account for them." These words, taken from the sun-dial at Oxford University, seem to express the sentiment with which you give me your attention today, when I speak to you, fellow-associates, in the name of the governing body of this library. Hours have lengthened into days, days into years, and years have spanned the quarter of a century, since you laid upon our shoulders the burden of creating and building up a library to meet the wants of our profession in this community. Most of us have become silverites in the process of time and regard the ratio of sixteen to one as very moderate. A few are in position to follow the example of a friend of mine, who has discarded a brush and comb from his toilet set and claims that all he needs to do in the morning is to dust off the top of his head. A few, happily but few, of our early collaborators have fallen by the wayside and are no longer with us today to enjoy the full consummation of their efforts. I cannot mention them all; you know them — the impetuous, high-minded Bowditch, the beneficent Shattuck, the quiet, persistent Ellis, the sturdy Buckingham, the erudite Fifield, that dazzling genius Bigelow, and among the younger men, the scholarly Curtis, the wise Hooper, the wholehearted, witty Wigglesworth.

Last to be mentioned, but first in all your minds today, is he who lent us the prestige of his name at the inception of our undertaking — Oliver Wendell Holmes, our first president, litterateur, poet, wit, and for thirty-five years professor of anatomy at the Harvard Medical School. Our debt to him can never be paid, but we intend to keep it alive in our memory by dedicating to him our principal reading room, to be known through all time as Holmes Hall. His bust in bronze, a replica of that made by R. E. Brooks for the

Boston Public Library, looks down upon us from over the mantelpiece at one end, his portrait by Billings at the other. We have many mementoes of him scattered through the hall; the latch of the house in which he was born; the earliest known portrait of him, a daguerrotype taken by Whipple & Hawes about 1845; his fist cast in bronze for me by the sculptor, T. H. Bartlett, with regard to which the latter tells an amusing and characteristic story. When Dr. Holmes was asked if he would hold a pen while the mould was being made, he said, "No," doubling up his fist like a prizefighter's. "Take it that way, which does not show the wrinkles of old age, does it?" His medical library of nearly 1,000 volumes, including many superb tomes of anatomical plates in which he took the keenest delight, will there find a suitable abiding place in accordance with his dying bequest in 1894.

In his poem "To the Portrait of a Lady" he says:

"I love sweet features; I will own
That I should like myself
To see my portrait on a wall,
Or bust upon a shelf;
But Nature sometimes makes us up
Of such sad odds and ends,
It really might be quite as well
Hushed up among one's friends."

His wish is gratified by us, his friends.

Happily, some of us, men of '75, survive to enjoy the pleasure of this moment, when we welcome you to the regal abode which your bounty has provided, in recognition of the library which our labors have brought together.

"The longest life" is said to be "a parcel of moments," so the largest library is but an aggregation of individual books. Exclusive of duplicates for home circulation, we have today upon our shelves about 33,000 volumes and 30,000 pamphlets; yet these figures give but a partial idea of our resources. To make this more clear I must bring to your minds the change which time has brought about in the literature of medicine. Without dwelling upon the ponderous tomes in which was buried the medical lore of the early

centuries after the discovery of printing, which your orator and president of twenty-two years ago dilated upon so learnedly and so wittily, I would ask you to come with me for a moment into the market place of Venice in the early part of the sixteenth century to scan a document, written in a legible hand, posted there and elsewhere in the city, for the perusal of those merchants who chose to pay a *gazzetta* for the privilege. You would find that it gave the news brought back to Venice by some one of its adventurous captains, who had strayed beyond the limits defined in his rude chart, and made another land discovery in the far West or the far South. "The arrival of the ship in the Adriatic, the contents of its cargo, the price of commodities abroad, together with some account of a newly discovered island, its wonderful people and marvellous products would form the staple of the news-sheet of the hour."

When in 1536 the Venetian possessions in the East were attacked by the Turks, the first regular monthly journal was established by the government to supply news from the fleet, and men were paid to read the particulars at the principal points of the city, but no sheets were issued except such as were sanctioned by the Doge and his council. The officials were so jealous of the printing press, however, that it was nearly fifty years after this time that the first printed newspaper was published in the city and dispersed every month into most parts of Christendom.

It is probably true, as claimed by the Germans, that their nation was the first to actually publish a printed newspaper, a certain *Relation*, which appeared in Strassburg, fifty-two numbers of which, dating from the year 1609, are preserved in Heidelberg. The *Frankfurt Journal* was not published until 1615; the first English paper, the *Weekly News*, in 1623; the first French journal in 1630.

Be that as it may, the now universal *Gazette* is seen to have come from the small coin originally paid for the perusal of its manuscript predecessor. From this modest beginning has developed the enormous mass of periodicals which characterize the literature of medicine and most other branches of science at the present day. In medicine the greater part of this change has taken place in the nineteenth century.

When six of us young men met on December 21, 1874, to discuss the possibility of founding this library, and when we actually did found it on August 20, 1875, we were fully cognizant of this change that was rapidly taking place in the character of medical literature; we knew that the era of theories and systems in medicine was being pulverized into nothingness by the accumulation of crude facts and that these facts were to be found chiefly in periodical literature. Periodicals were then increasing at so rapid a rate that few private individuals could afford to obtain, or even give, them shelf room.

We did not at that time foresee that this difficulty was to be increased a hundredfold, not merely by the multiplication of individual periodicals—great as that might become—but by the publication of a colossal index to all previous medical literature, including every article in every one of the numerous periodicals.

In 1879 the library of the Surgeon-General's Office in Washington, under the charge of an army surgeon, Dr. John S. Billings (whose presence here today is a fresh manifestation of his warm interest in our library), began the publication of an index catalogue of its collections, which comprised practically all medical literature up to that date. The first series of sixteen volumes, quarto, was completed in 1895; the new series, comprising accessions since the publication of the first series, has already reached the fifth volume.

Its value to medical scholars is inestimable, superseding, as it does, all the time-wasting labor that used to be expended in bibliographical research. By its aid we obtain a reference to every rare case that has been recorded since printing was discovered in A. D. 1450. But by indexing the articles and reports of cases in every periodical, past and present, obscure and famous, this catalogue has immensely extended the scope of medical research and created a demand for an array of books, and especially of periodicals, that is simply appalling.

I have dwelt at some length on this peculiarity of the medical literature of the present day that you might understand why it has been the constant aim of your librarian, during the past twenty-five years, to complete the files of all the important periodicals. His efforts have been attended with such

success, despite the small funds at his disposal, that more than half of the volumes upon our shelves belong to that category. We are able to supply about seven-eighths of all the references to current literature demanded by our readers, even though they avail themselves of this great universal index.

It may pertinently be asked how our association, with practically no invested funds, has been able to achieve such results in the accumulation of books; for the table of curves suspended above me shows that in twenty-five years we have been able to outstrip many of the libraries which antedate us by many years in their foundation. Our library is already the fourth in size in the country, being exceeded only by that of the Surgeon-General's Office in Washington, that of the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, and that of the Academy of Medicine in New York.

I will tell you briefly. In the first place, we were fortunate enough to secure, at the onset, the custodianship of the libraries of all the societies pre-existing in the city. In the second place, most liberal contributions were made to us by many private individuals. In the third place, the completeness of our files of journals and transactions I attribute largely to the existence of the volume which I hold in my hand, my "want book," wherein, upon the left-hand page, is entered every periodical of which we have any part, while on the opposite page is entered every volume or number needed to complete the file of that particular journal. By invariably carrying this with me upon my travels in this country and Europe, I have been able gradually, at a trifling expenditure of money, to complete the files of all the leading periodicals of the world. I submit this to your special attention if you wish to know how to build up a medical library with practically no funds for the purchase of books.

So much for our accomplishment in the chief purpose for which we were brought into being. In some other ways we are making ourselves of use to the profession and to the community. For over twenty years we have been conducting a Directory for Nurses, which has been of immense value in putting, at the shortest possible notice, the nurses of the State into communication with the physicians and their patients who wish to secure their ser-

vices. Incidentally we have been able to raise the standard of nursing by putting a premium upon competence and training.

We have added to the amenities of professional life by supplying suitable halls for the meetings of the various medical societies and by hanging upon our walls the portraits of past worthies.

Within the past month we have received from Dr. Horatio R. Storer, of Newport, R. I., formerly of Boston, the gift of a most remarkable collection of medical medals, numbering 2,300 pieces. Only two other collections exist in the world at all commensurate with this, that of Dr. Joseph Brettatur, of Trieste, and that belonging to the library of the Surgeon-General's Office in Washington. Of the six other great collections that have been formed during the past two centuries, all have been scattered except that of Rueppelli, which was bequeathed to the Sankenbergische Gesellschaft of Frankfort. Considered either from its historic interest, its esthetic merits, or its pecuniary value, I consider this gift as the most noteworthy that this association has thus far received. It is to be known as the Storer Collection of Medical Medals in memory of Dr. D. Humphreys Storer, the father of the donor, and is to be in charge of a son of the donor, Dr. Malcolm Storer, an accomplished numismatist.

We have a collection of many thousand autograph letters of past and present medical writers and practitioners, only awaiting the appearance of a custodian with time and enthusiasm to classify them and thus make them available to students of history at its original sources.

To recapitulate briefly: We started in, twenty-five years ago, with the one purpose of supplying the needs of the medical profession in the way of literature properly catalogued and otherwise made available to all students. The gift of this spacious building from the profession of this city is the best evidence that we have achieved our purpose. Shall we rest contented with the laurels which we have won? I venture to hope not. I think that we acted wisely in limiting the expenditure of our energies and of our money to the one purpose of building up a library, so long as that was the one thing most needed in the city. Now that we have secured the library and the best equipped building in the country in which to store it, we may properly

consider whether the time has not come to enlarge the scope of our functions by assuming the rôle of a society in addition to that of a library.

A rich merchant of Athens gave the use of his house and gardens on the outskirts of that city to several philosophic friends for the site of their reunions. There Plato instructed his numerous disciples. This place was called "Academy" from the name of the owner, Academus. Cicero gave the same name to his country place near the lake of Avernus and devoted it to the same purpose. Now that we have a similar spacious domicile, surrounded by gardens, which we owe to the munificence of the city, I would propose that we follow the example of our remote ancestors and invite our philosophic brethren to hold their reunions in our halls, not as guests merely, but as integral parts of our association, and that we assume the name as well as the obligations of an academy.

It is not merely on account of the archeological parallel, over which my fancy thus plays, that I make this proposition to extend so radically the sphere of our activity. I have watched for many years the careers of similar institutions in other cities and have come to believe that the conjunction of the double attributes of a library and a society much more than doubles the usefulness of the institution. The authority and prestige enjoyed in their respective cities by the Academy of Medicine in New York, and the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, have no analogue in Boston. I remember being greatly impressed with this lack of an authoritative body of medical men in our midst when I was reading many years ago of the spread of a yellow-fever epidemic. The question of a quarantine against it was under discussion in Philadelphia by the State and city authorities, who referred the whole subject to the College of Physicians, which appointed from its numbers a committee of experts whose report was accepted by the government as final and its recommendations carried out. I could not help thinking at the time that had our State and City Boards of Health, in which we take justifiable pride, needed guidance, or even the support of popular opinion, in such an emergency, they would not have known to what body of medical men they could appeal with the assurance that the public would recognize that body as authoritative. Apart from this important rôle, which we have a chance

to fill, our new building will enable us to develop the social side of the physician's life. We may become to a fuller extent than heretofore the centre of all activity among the medical men of the State.

But this subject requires more study and deeper consideration than it can receive on such an occasion as this, and it needs moreover the enthusiasm of youth to bring it to a happy issue. It is time that we, men of '75, stepped down from our official positions and laid upon more stalwart shoulders the burden of accomplishing the latter part of our dream.

“ And ye who fill the places we once filled,
And follow in the furrows we once tilled,
Young men whose generous hearts are beating high,
We who are old and are about to die,
Salute you; hail you; take your hands in ours,
And crown you with our welcome as with flowers!

“ How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams
With illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of Beginnings, story without end,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!
Aladdin's Lamp and Fortunatus' Purse,
That holds the treasures of the Universe!
All possibilities are in its hands,
No danger daunts it, and no foe withstands;
In its sublime audacity of faith,
' Be thou removed! ' it to the mountain saith,
And with audacious feet, secure and proud,
Ascends the ladder leaning on the cloud! ”

REMARKS.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: We hope to make this building the permanent home of the Massachusetts Medical Society. The cohesive and conservative force of our parent organization is well represented in its president — the medico-legal pathologist, may I not say, of New England.

REMARKS BY F. W. DRAPER, M.D.,

President of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

It is a congenial official duty, Mr. President, and an enviable personal honor, to respond to your call, and, in the name of the Massachusetts Medical Society, to swell the chorus of congratulations which this occasion inspires. To one who has watched the evolution of this Medical Library from its beginning to its present moment, this jubilee is as appropriate as it is spontaneous. I recall the modest but hopeful way in which the library began its housekeeping in Hamilton Place. I remember in what an incredibly short time it burst its bounds, becoming so megalomaniacal that all books in sight were gathered in; the result of this benevolent assimilation, this rapid expansion, was its removal to other and larger premises. How it has grown and prospered there, how it has faithfully fulfilled its mission, under somewhat trying conditions, while in that diverticulum of hidden dangers, that Bohemian midway pleasance, Boylston Place, you can all remember.

And now, following the westward example of every correct imperial course, it has made its second migration and has come here to what we may believe is its permanent home. And when we contemplate that home, its faultless architecture, its picturesque and dignified environment, its ample

appointments, it is easy to join in expressions of gratification and to congratulate the library corporation upon this auspicious and most satisfactory achievement. Here the many thousand books which comprise this library have a fitting domicile, and one can almost hear them say, one to another, as they settle themselves contentedly in their permanent and harmonious places on the shelves, "Isn't this restful? Isn't this comfort?" Here the busy man in active practice can quickly find just the help he wants to take him over his clinical difficulties. Here the scholarly lover of good books can browse at his leisure in the well-tilled, overproductive fields of medical literature. Here the diligent seeker for facts finds in the files of current medical journals, gathered in this storehouse from all parts of the world, the latest record of research and observation. Here the ambitious undergraduate student of medicine, eager for knowledge, satisfies his longing.

And, then, there is another way in which this library meets the needs of medical men and appeals to their gratitude. I know of nothing quite so depressing in the experience of a sensitive physician as the absolutely heartless way in which his tried and trusted friends, the books in his medical library, are hustled and forced to the rear by new and strenuous candidates for favor. These older familiar guides and counsellors of his, whom he has loved and in whom he has confided, must be pushed aside to make room for the latest publication; senile obsolescence claims them as its victims while they are yet young. Something of the same sort is seen in the rapidly moving procession of new and revised editions of the standard works. You begin to get accustomed to Dr. Osler's classic volume when his second edition knocks at the door and seeks admission, and this has hardly settled in its place and become acquainted with its neighbors when the third edition is announced. And so it goes with all the writers whom we recognize as the leading authorities. The demand for new editions is good proof of the advance of medicine, but it requires an alert brain and a plethoric purse to do it justice. Thus it happens that most private libraries of medical books, belonging to physicians in middle life, contain many volumes too old to be usefully modern and not old enough to be valuable on that account. And it is here that the Medical Library in this building will help us; because, for

the modest annual assessment, every member can have the benefit of the latest thing in medical literature, either in original works or in new editions. And this is a very obvious advantage.

The reasons why the Massachusetts Medical Society should take special interest in the Medical Library are plain. In all its century and more of organized life, our venerable but ever vigorous State medical fellowship has been the consistent patron of sound medical literature, the zealous advocate of the best in medical education, the cordial exponent of medical progress; and in all these relations it is in closest sympathy with the fundamental spirit and purpose of this library. I would remind you, too, that the membership of this institution is largely composed of Fellows of the Massachusetts Medical Society; that its entire administration has been in their hands, and that the successful development and nurture of it have been under their guidance and control. It is not surprising, then, that the Massachusetts Medical Society takes an interest in this consummation of an enterprise which you, sir, and your associates have accomplished. And it is entirely proper that it should add its laurel wreath of special appreciation as a tribute to the man whom Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes once described as the "untiring, imperturbable, tenacious, irrepressible, all-subduing agitator, who neither rested nor let others rest until the success of the library project was assured." The description fits Dr. Chadwick today as accurately as it did in 1878.

I must not forget to allude to another and very intimate relationship which the library sustains towards the society, the relationship of landlord and tenant, continuing under this roof an association which has been mutually satisfactory for many years; and I am glad to have this opportunity to make public acknowledgment of the liberal and altogether acceptable manner in which the tenant's needs have been met. As time goes by, these large and attractive halls will be the scene of meetings and of conferences representing the best thought of the medical men of this community. More than that — here will be found the very centre and focus of our highest medical interests, the home of our medical sodality, where the rust of exclusiveness and reserve will be rubbed away by social contact with our fellows, and where we

may cultivate mutual respect and courtesy, taking counsel together and standing together for the highest good of our profession.

These are some of the considerations, Mr. President, which not only inspire gratitude and congratulation, but awaken the most cordial hope that the library will have increasing prosperity through all its future; that it will be an important factor in promoting the progress of medicine in this city, there is not a shadow of doubt.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: The professor of medicine of Johns Hopkins University is himself one of the best examples of the scientific progress of our profession. As a clear and forceful writer, as a sound, and not too progressive, practitioner, as a lucid expounder in the clinic, he is well recognized in our United States. He has honored us by his presence and has promised to address us.

REMARKS² BY WILLIAM OSLER, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.,

Professor of Medicine in the Johns Hopkins University.

THOSE of us from other cities who bring congratulations this evening can hardly escape the tinglings of envy when we see this noble treasure house; but in my own case the bitter waters of jealousy which rise in my soul are at once diverted by two strong sensations. In the first place I have a feeling of lively gratitude towards this library. In 1876 as a youngster interested in certain clinical subjects to which I could find no reference in our library at McGill, I came to Boston, and I here found what I wanted, and I found moreover a cordial welcome and many friends. It was a small matter I was seeking, but I wished to make it as complete as possible, and I have always felt that this library helped me to a good start. It has always been such a pleasure in recurring visits to the library to find Dr. Brigham in charge, with the same kindly interest in visitors that he showed a quarter of a century ago. But the feeling which absorbs all others is one of deep satisfaction that our friend, Dr. Chadwick, has at last seen fulfilled the desire of his eyes. To few is given the tenacity of will which enables a man to pursue a cherished purpose through a quarter of a century — "*Ohne Hast, aber ohne Rast*" ('tis his favorite quotation); to fewer still is the fruition granted. Too often the reaper is not the sower. Too often the fate of those

² Books and Men.

who labor at some object for the public good is to see their work pass into other hands, and to have others get the credit for enterprises which they have initiated and made possible. It has not been so with our friend, and it intensifies a thousandfold the pleasure of this occasion to feel the fitness, in every way, of the felicitations which have been offered to him.

It is hard for me to speak of the value of libraries in terms which would not seem exaggerated. Books have been my delight these thirty years, and from them I have received incalculable benefits. To study the phenomena of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to go to sea at all. Only a maker of books can appreciate the labors of others at their true value. Those of us who have brought forth fat volumes should offer hecatombs at these shrines of Minerva Medica. What exsuccous, attenuated offspring they would have been but for the pabulum furnished through the placental circulation of a library. How often can it be said of us with truth, "*Das beste was er ist verdankt er Andern!*"

For the teacher and the worker a great library such as this is indispensable. They must know the world's best work and know it at once. They mint and make current coin the ore so widely scattered in journals, transactions and monographs. The splendid collections which now exist in five or six of our cities and the unique opportunities of the Surgeon-General's Library have done much to give to American medicine its thoroughly eclectic character.

But when one considers the unending making of books, who does not sigh for the happy days of that thrice happy Sir William Browne whose pocket library sufficed for his life's needs; drawing from a Greek testament his divinity, from the aphorisms of Hippocrates his medicine, and from an Elzevir Horace his good sense and vivacity. There should be in connection with every library a corps of instructors in the art of reading, who would, as a labor of love, teach the young idea how to read. An old writer says that there are four sorts of readers: "Sponges which attract all without distinguishing; Howre-glasses which receive and powre out as fast; Bagges which only retain the dregges of the spices and let the wine escape, and Sives

which retain the best only." A man wastes a great many years before he reaches the 'sive' stage.

For the general practitioner a well-used library is one of the few correctives of the premature senility which is so apt to overtake him. Self-centred, self-taught, he leads a solitary life, and unless his every-day experience is controlled by careful reading or by the attrition of a medical society it soon ceases to be of the slightest value and becomes a mere accretion of isolated facts, without correlation. It is astonishing with how little reading a doctor can practise medicine, but it is not astonishing how badly he may do it. Not three months ago a physician living within an hour's ride of the Surgeon-General's Library brought his little girl, aged twelve, to me. The diagnosis of infantile myxedema required only half a glance. In placid contentment he had been practising twenty years in "Sleepy Hollow" and not even when his own flesh and blood was touched did he rouse from an apathy deep as Rip Van Winkle's sleep. In reply to questions: No, he had never seen anything in the journals about the thyroid gland; he had seen no pictures of cretinism or myxedema; in fact his mind was a blank on the whole subject. He had not been a reader, he said, but he was a practical man with very little time. I could not help thinking of John Bunyan's remarks on the elements of success in the practice of medicine. "Physicians," he says, "get neither name nor fame by the pricking of wheals or the picking out thistles, or by laying of plaisters to the scratch of a pin; every old woman can do this. But if they would have a name and a fame, if they will have it quickly, they must do some great and desperate cures. Let them fetch one to life that was dead, let them recover one to his wits that was mad, let them make one that was born blind to see, or let them give ripe wits to a fool — these are notable cures, and he that can do thus, if he doth thus first, he shall have the name and fame he deserves; he may lie abed till noon." Had my doctor friend been a reader he might have done a great and notable cure and even have given ripe wits to a fool! It is in utilizing the fresh knowledge of the journals that the young physician may attain quickly to the name and fame he desires.

There is a third class of men in the profession to whom books are dearer than to teachers or practitioners — a small, a silent band, but in reality the

leaven of the whole lump. The profane call them bibliomaniacs, and in truth they are at times irresponsible and do not always know the difference between *meum* and *tuum*. In the presence of Dr. Billings or of Dr. Chadwick I dare not further characterize them. Loving books partly for their contents, partly for the sake of the authors, they not alone keep alive the sentiment of historical continuity in the profession, but they are the men who make possible such gatherings as the one we are enjoying this evening. We need more men of their class, particularly in this country, where every one carries in his pocket the tape-measure of utility. Along two lines their work is valuable. By the historical method alone can many problems in medicine be approached profitably. For example, the student who dates his knowledge of tuberculosis from Koch may have a very correct, but he has a very incomplete, appreciation of the subject. Within a quarter of a century our libraries will have certain alcoves devoted to the historical consideration of the great diseases, which will give to the student that mental perspective which is so valuable an equipment in life. The past is a good nurse, as Lowell remarks, particularly for the weanlings of the fold.

" 'Tis man's worst deed
To let the things that have been run to waste
And in the unmeaning Present sink the Past."

But in a more excellent way these *laudatores temporis acti* render a royal service. For each one of us today, as in Plato's time, there is a higher as well as a lower education. The very marrow and fatness of books may not suffice to save a man from becoming a poor, mean-spirited devil, without a spark of fine professional feeling, and without a thought above the sordid issues of the day. The men I speak of keep alive in us an interest in the great men of the past and not alone in their works, which they cherish, but in their lives, which they emulate. They would remind us continually that in the records of no other profession is there to be found so large a number of men who have combined intellectual pre-eminence with nobility of character. This higher education so much needed today is not given in the schools, is not to be bought in the market place, but it has to be wrought out in each one of us for himself; it is the silent influence of character on character and in no

way more potently than in the contemplation of the lives of the great and good of the past, in no way more than in "the touch divine of noble natures gone."

I should like to see in each library a select company of the Immortals set apart for special adoration. Each country might have its representatives in a sort of alcove of Fame, in which the great medical classics were gathered. Not necessarily books, more often the epoch-making contributions to be found in ephemeral journals. It is too early, perhaps, to make a selection of American medical classics, but it might be worth while to gather suffrages on the contributions which should go upon the Roll of Honor. I did a few years ago make out a list of those I thought the most worthy to 1850, and it has a certain interest for us this evening. The native modesty of the Boston physician is well known, but in certain circles there has always been associated with it a curious psychical phenomenon, a conviction of the utter worthlessness of the *status præsens* in New England, as compared with conditions existing elsewhere. There is a variety today of the Back Bay Brahmin who delights in cherishing the belief that medically things are everywhere better than in Boston, and who is always ready to predict "an Asiatic removal of candlesticks," to borrow a phrase from Cotton Mather. Strange indeed would it have been had not such a plastic profession as ours felt the influences which moulded New England into the intellectual centre of the New World. In reality, nowhere in the country has the profession been adorned more plentifully with men of culture and of character and, happily, not voluminous writers or exploiters of the products of other men's brains — they would manage to get a full share on the Roll of Fame which I have suggested. To 1850, I have counted some twenty contributions of the first rank, contributions which for one reason or another deserve to be called American medical classics. New England takes ten. But in medicine the men she has given to the other parts of the country have been better than books. Men like Nathan R. Smith, Austin Flint, Willard Parker, Alonzo Clark, Elisha Bartlett, John C. Dalton and others carried away from their New England homes a love of truth, a love of learning and above all a proper estimate of the personal character of the physician.

Dr. Johnson shrewdly remarked that ambition was usually proportionate to capacity, which is as true of a profession as it is of a man. What we have seen tonight reflects credit not less on your ambition than on your capacity. A library after all is a great catalyser, accelerating the nutrition and rate of progress in a profession, and I am sure you will find yourselves the better for the sacrifice you have made in securing this home for your books, this workshop for your members.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: The librarian of the New York Public Library represents the largest collections of our land next to the Congressional Library. Fortunate for us and for medicine that he has given some of the best years of his life to our interests, and that in the Surgeon-General's Office and in the Army Museum and Library he has indexed the medical universe.

REMARKS BY J. S. BILLINGS, M.D., LL.D., D.C.L.,

Librarian of the New York Public Library.

No doubt we have all heard "platform figureheads"—of advanced years and much experience—commence their remarks on occasions like this by saying that one of the privileges of old age is the perspective, restrospective view which it gives of institutions, society and the world in general. I used to suppose that this was an excuse for, and explanation of, the attitude of sage and prophet assumed by the speaker, and that he enjoyed solid comfort in giving advice; but I am now beginning to appreciate how those old gentlemen really felt when they announced this important discovery. Most of them, I think, did not feel as wise as they looked, nor as certain and free from doubt as they did in their youth, but circumstance compelled them to speak, and this was a way to begin.

As I look back to the ceremonies of opening the then new building for this library in Boylston Place in 1878, I find that of the speakers on that occasion, I am the only one now present. President Eliot is still very much alive, although not here tonight; but Holmes, Ellis, Lyman, Smith, Henry I. Bowditch and Justin Winsor have passed away, and their biographies have been written. Fortunately, the results of their work remain and are enlarging, and one of these results we have before us tonight.

The medical prospect has changed somewhat within the last twenty-two years; there is a new literature, a new pathology, a new surgery, and new names for some very old things, — Christian Science, for example, — but the

old records have not lost all interest, and the special value of the library is that it contains both the old and the new. In his memorable address twenty-two years ago, Dr. Holmes rightly insisted that a library like this must exercise the largest hospitality, but this applies to gifts rather than to purchases. The funds for conducting a library, medical or other, are always insufficient, and the librarian, or library committee, must therefore exclude from the purchase lists many works which might be welcome additions if obtainable from other sources. The selection is sometimes difficult, and in making it, the work of other reference libraries in the vicinity, such as the public library, the university library, and some special libraries, must be considered. Even gifts must be scrutinized with reference to available space, and to their relative utility in other neighboring institutions. This library does not want a set of United States public documents, or of Massachusetts documents, although in each of these series there are a few things which it should secure. Curious things may be found in public documents. How many of you, I wonder, have ever heard of Herkimer Sternberg, and his great medical discovery, which is vaguely indicated in the following extract from Document No. 15 of the Assembly of the State of New York, dated January 15, 1859, being a report of the Committee on Medical Societies and Colleges, relative to the petition of Herkimer Sternberg for aid in publishing his manuscript of a proposed work. The committee reports "that they have had under their serious consideration the subject referred to them and have become satisfied if the prayer of the petitioner be granted, that the result of the scheme proposed by this Herkimer Sternberg, if successful, will be the annihilation of the medical profession, and thus the five or six thousand doctors of our State will be turned out upon the cold charities of an unfeeling world; that it will introduce the millenium several years before its proper advent in the regular order of business; that it will dislocate every joint in the system of the moral universe . . . and, therefore, the committee ask to be discharged from its further consideration."

In cities where there is no medical library, it is clearly the duty of the public library to provide some of the best medical books and periodicals for the use of the physicians of the city, as well as for the direct benefit of the

public. It, is however, a matter of common experience that some lay readers are rather injured than benefited by reading medicine, and that it is best to restrict the use of certain classes of medical books. It simplifies the problems of the librarian of the public library when he knows that there is in the city a special medical library available for the use of physicians, and that he need only obtain those books which, if not exactly suitable for public use, are not calculated to do much harm. He will usually be glad to send to such a medical library the medical books of the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century, old medical journals, miscellaneous medical pamphlets, theses, reports, etc., and to retain in the public library only those which have some interest in local history, or in other subjects besides medicine.

There are certain duties and responsibilities which rest upon a few large reference libraries which do not pertain to the great majority of city public libraries. For example, the average city library should collect and preserve all the reports of hospitals in its own city as a matter of local history, but it should not waste time or energy over the reports of hospitals in other cities, but should send those that come in either to a medical library or to one of the great reference libraries of the country like the Boston Public, the New York Public, or the Congressional Library. These great libraries must collect and preserve such reports as a part of their collections relating to charities—private and public—an important branch of sociology, but they are only useful in this way when the collections are very large and permit of comparisons of methods and results from a wide area and for considerable periods of time.

The field of medicine is very broad, and the special medical library might properly include not only general biology with its general subdivisions of morphology, physiology, psychology and anthropology, but also much of the literature of botany, zoölogy, chemistry, physics, municipal engineering, building and other applied sciences—and in fact the great medical libraries of London, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg and Washington do include many of these subjects. But this requires more space and money than most medical libraries can afford to give, and hence it is usually best to leave most of these subjects to other special libraries.

The department of first importance in a library like this is that which contains its files of periodicals, not only because they contain the original records from which textbooks and monographs are made up, but they represent the feelings, views and wants of the great mass of the profession, and are the great sources for the medical history of the nineteenth century. Medicine is now the most cosmopolitan and international of all the arts and professions, and this is largely due to its periodicals. Moreover, its periodical literature is now more accessible than that of any other profession because of the indexes upon which Dr. Holmes so much insisted. All this has been fully recognized by your librarian, and you are very rich in this class of literature. Thanks to the efforts of the medical profession of Boston (aided by those of some other parts of the country), Congress was induced to order the printing of the Index Catalogue of the Washington Collection which was under consideration twenty-two years ago, and which I then thought might make six volumes. This Index Catalogue is not yet finished, only twenty volumes having been published; but it can give considerable employment to the bibliographical student even now, and has probably added to the practical utility of this library, but perhaps not always to the perfect joy and content of its readers.

The fact that the physicians of Boston have another library besides this one to care for, as shown by their action with regard to the Index Catalogue, is one that I venture to remind you of because the needs of your National Medical Library are liable to be overlooked. Just now it is in urgent need of shelving for its additions, some of which are being stored in window sills or on the floor, which is bad for the books and for the readers.

Requests for funds to provide this shelving have been presented at the last two sessions of Congress, but received no attention. An estimate is before the present Congress for \$9,000 to supply this shelving, and if the Massachusetts representatives and senators hear from their medical constituents that this is a matter in which they are interested, there is no doubt that it will be done. Your Washington Medical Library now contains 136,000 volumes and 230,000 pamphlets — decidedly the largest and best library of its kind in the world — and ought to be kept up to date in good shape.

When I tried to say something on the occasion of the opening of this library in the Boylston Place Building, I well remember that I was very much embarrassed and not a little afraid, and would have been very glad to have been merely a listener.

On the present occasion, while I am in trouble to find the right words in which to express my thoughts and feelings, I am very glad indeed to have the opportunity to congratulate you upon the result of the work of the Boston Medical Library Association during the last twenty-five years, and I do congratulate you most heartily and sincerely. The collection of books, of portraits, of medals, the building in its plan, structure and furnishings, are all things of which you have good right to be proud, and with which you may rest satisfied for several weeks to come.

As you all know, these results are largely due to the fact that one man having abundance of energy and public spirit, with much knowledge and an insatiable thirst for more, and with a fairly definite idea of what he wanted, has been working incessantly for the last quarter of a century towards this end. I congratulate you upon your wisdom in letting him thus work, and in helping him to carry out this plan. His power for good has not been limited to Boston, for by way of recreation he has devoted some of his time to stirring up and stimulating other librarians like myself, when he thought they needed it, or when he had some superfluous energy to dispose of, which was often. In this and other ways, he has given material and valuable assistance to other libraries, more than any of you are aware of, and it is not my personal affection for him, great as that is, but a sense of what is just and right, which leads me to say to you that, while the Boston Medical Library has been his special pet, for which no trouble was too great to take, and no sacrifice too great to make, all other medical libraries in this country are more or less indebted for their progress and prosperity to your librarian, Dr. James R. Chadwick.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: The genial professor of therapeutics from Philadelphia will now address us. He is also a professor of nervous diseases, but he will omit that branch on this occasion. As representing the oldest medical centre in America, and still among the most modern, I take especial pleasure in introducing him to you.

REMARKS BY H. C. WOOD, M.D., LL.D.,

College of Physicians of Philadelphia; Professor of Nervous Diseases and Therapeutics, University of Pennsylvania.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE ASSISTED IN THE CREATION OF THE BOSTON MEDICAL LIBRARY. — It is with a high sense of the honor conferred upon me that I bring greetings and congratulations in this, the opening of the twentieth century, to you, the fruit of whose labors is seen in the substantial edifice and the loaded bookshelves which surround us; greetings and congratulations from the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

In doing this I desire to express most warmly my appreciation of the great work which has been done largely through the efforts of a few men among you, and in a comparatively brief period. It may well be questioned whether so rapidly a successful effort has been equalled upon the American Continent, and I trust that it will be understood that what I have to say in regard to the institution which I represent is said in no spirit of egotism, but simply as the effort of age, perhaps senile and garrulous, to read lessons to the young through its own experience.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia was born January 2, 1787, amidst surroundings most primitive, and has grown with the growth of American civilization. That the founders of the college had very clear ideas as to the necessity of a medical library for the increase of medical knowledge,

and for the perfection of medical units, is shown by the fact that during the first year of its existence the college discussed the subject, and a few weeks later, namely, on March 3, 1788, by the formal acceptance of the gift from Dr. John Morgan of 24 volumes, by the approval of a regular plan for a library, and by the appropriation of fifty pounds — Colonial — for the purchase of books, laid the foundation of that collection of medical books which is today the most valuable of its kind in the United States, save only the one in Washington belonging to the Federal Government. In the library of the college at Philadelphia there are at present 61,359, or including duplicates, 65,499 volumes, besides unbound pamphlets; there is also an especial fund of \$50,000 for the purchase of new books.

It has seemed to me, in thinking over what I know of the profession in Boston, that possibly it might be well for the association of physicians which has been successful in the creation of the library about us to widen the scope of its operations, and thereby do great good and indirectly assist the library itself. So far as can be seen, if the founders of the College of Physicians had made the creation of the library their sole object, the library would have soon perished as one born out of due time. It has been the cohesive influence of aims other than those purely scholastic which has bound together successive generations of medical practitioners in Philadelphia so firmly as to make possible the gathering together of medical books; an object which was perhaps secondary in the minds of the founders, and besides which in their acts is clearly foreshadowed a threefold intent.

Plainly first among the results which it was hoped to attain was by fostering intercourse amongst fellows of the college to increase that personal friendship and amity which restrains far more powerfully tendencies to professional jealousy and undue rivalry than can any written law of ethics or any inculcation of precepts of professional conduct even during the educational period of life; the result has been that there are few members of the college who do not value the friendship and esteem of their fellows as their choicest possessions, and that the relations between members of the profession in Philadelphia are among the most perfect in the world.

The second object, for the attainment of which the college was seemingly

organized, was for the stimulation in its members of professional zeal in study and in doing what they could for the enlargement of the boundaries of medical knowledge. Even if time allowed, it would be scarcely becoming in me to show how successful the years have been in this respect, nor yet is it needful; the history of medicine in Philadelphia must be sufficiently known to you to recognize that in no other centre in the United States have there been more men of national or international fame, or more success either in actually increasing knowledge or in preparing it as brain food for the rank and file of the profession.

The third intent, which was early manifested in the acts of the college, was to afford a body of physicians, the conjoint local reputation of whose members would be sufficient to give overwhelming weight to any deliberate expression of opinion made by the assembly upon matters medical in which the general public was concerned.

A few months after the foundation of the library, namely, in April, 1789, the influence of the college was first brought to bear upon the public authorities. The old records show that at the time there was a widespread epidemic of influenza in Philadelphia; that the President of the United States was to visit the city on his way from Mt. Vernon to New York, where he was to be inaugurated; and that among other ceremonies a general illumination was proposed; but that on the representation of the college that the late night exposure in the month of April would undoubtedly increase the number of victims of the prevailing disease, the proposed illumination was abandoned. The action of the college and its results may after all have been matters of no great importance, but they were drifting straws, showing the set of the current of public opinion; a current which later in the same year led the Legislature of Pennsylvania to formally apply to the college for assistance in the emendation of the State laws for the prevention of the introduction of infectious diseases.

To make further citations of similar instances of correlation between the College of Physicians and the governmental authorities of the State or of the city would require simply a going over the records of the history of the college, but I have been sternly warned not to overpass ten minutes of time,

so I forbear; only calling attention to the fact that the College of Physicians has frequently taken part in governmental procedures, and that the degree of attentiveness of the governmental ear to its voice has usually been a fair measure of the wisdom and the honesty of the governmental brain. As politics in the modern sense of the word has grown among us to be more and more of a special business, so has the governmental ear been dulled; as city or State governments have risen or ebbed in the standard of their purity, so have the admonitions of the college been listened to or neglected; and usually has the community reaped the reward or paid the penalty for such action, since in most cases the decisions of the college have been correct.

Such, gentlemen, is the brief lesson which I would read to you from the long and successful history of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia; led by it, I venture to urge that for the continuing success of your library, for the internal benefit of the profession in Boston, for the advancement of medical knowledge within your bounds, for the general good of the community in which you dwell, the association should broaden its scope, so that it should become not simply a library association but a veritable collegium, whose fellows pass through life hand in hand, in all fidelity inciting each other to good works.

May I further add that the history of the Philadelphia College indicates that in such broadening certain matters must be attended to. It seems to be primarily essential that all school fellowships and affiliations be laid aside in the membership. Alumni associations are well, but they have here no place. The graduate of Harvard must for the time being forget his Alma Mater in a wider brotherhood, so that whether a man be a Boston graduate or come from the far-off University of Tokyo, or from the school of Göttingen, he shall be equally available for membership in the association and for honors in its body politic. On the other hand, almost equally essential is it that no attempt be made to interfere with what may be considered the normal political aggregation of physicians in the United States, namely, the county medical societies, growing upward to the State societies, and then to the general association in the United States. In the county medical societies every legalized physician, who is willing to be honest and upright in his profession,

should have the right to take part, but in the proposed organization the standard of membership should be higher ; so that membership in the association should be looked upon as an honor, because it stands not only for high professional purity and ethicality, but also for high professional zeal and culture. It is given to but few to be professional leaders, but many can be honest medical gentlemen, highly cultured students, and thoroughly conscientious physicians ; of such and of such only should be the membership in the suggested College of Physicians of Boston.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: It is a good omen for us that a doctor of medicine is even a temporary ruler of Harvard University. Medicine and our Medical Library are well represented in the corporation. But in the acting president we have a conspicuous example of sanitary, professional and executive ability.

REMARKS BY HENRY P. WALCOTT, M.D.,

Acting President of Harvard University.

THE opening of a library devoted to the general purposes of literature, history and art would compel the representative of a great teaching body to say something about the appeal which such collections make to the cultivated and intelligent members of the community. We cannot, however, say that this collection of books will ever appeal to us in the higher sense in which the masters of literature have swayed their worlds.

You shall find no author here who has made a figment of his imagination as real as an actual personage of history.

The diseases of the human race, and I may add, too, those of the domesticated animals, have an interest that needs no play of the imagination and not even the graces of style. The description, however, must have scientific accuracy, and that implies competent authority.

We read in vain the matchless pages of Thucydides to discover the real nature of the plague at Athens; the great historian could not adequately describe a disease which he not only saw, but from which he had himself suffered. Our pious ancestors resolved that "good learning should not perish from among us," and so founded the schools at Cambridge. The first substantial help was given by John Harvard, but little less precious than his bequest in money was the legacy of his books. It is well, then, that we should here cherish books, and it may be interesting to consider for a moment how Harvard College has used its libraries.

In my own college days the librarians were little more than watch dogs of the collections under their charge. Beyond the volumes of Reis's Cyclopædia, the *North American Review* and some of the English quarterlies, students were rarely allowed access to the actual presence of the books; twice a week we were allowed to take out books for use in our rooms. The result was that the faithful officers turned over to their successors the unused and well preserved contents of the shelves. A generation has passed away and I can now read in the latest report of the college librarian this statement:

"The number of books but continues to increase at a fairly steady rate. Borrowing has doubtless been encouraged by the large number of attractive books, both old and new, that are constantly kept on open shelves in the delivery room, where every one who comes into the library is tempted to look them over."

The whole number of students in Cambridge is 3,151; number taking books, 2,488. The collection is open both daytime and evening through the week and also on the afternoon of Sunday. The University Library is credited with the possession of 548,000 books; of these, however, only 379,000 are deposited in the general collection in Grove Hall. The rest are in the various departments and laboratory libraries; the Law School has 50,000 volumes; the Museum of Zoölogy, 34,000; the Divinity School, 30,000; the Astronomical Observatory, 9,000; the Gray Herbarium, 7,500, and last, and in this case least, the Medical School is said to have 2,240.

Beyond this system of department libraries there is another and more extensive system of laboratory and classroom libraries, twenty-four in number, varying in size from the Library of History, Political Economy and Sociology of 4,500 volumes, down to the Preachers' Library in Wadsworth House of less than 100 volumes.

In this enumeration, the striking fact is the absolute poverty of the Medical Library as compared with the collection with which a comparison may be justly sought — the Zoölogical Library built up under the fostering care of its great and generous curator; a working library only, which is annually turning back into the great receptacle in Grove Hall such books as have become of historical interest only.

The explanation of this seeming lack of care on the part of the university for her Medical School, in which she takes a just pride, is undoubtedly to be found in the fact that the resources of this library have been most freely given to the teachers and students of the school. The authorities of the university may well consider whether some equitable arrangement may not be possible for giving to the library an equivalent for the valuable and necessary assistance so freely and generously bestowed.

LETTER.

PRESIDENT CHEEVER: We had hoped to have with us tonight the Holmes of Philadelphia, himself both a lover and an author of books, a valued contributor to medical and to general literature, a master of style in prose and in verse. I ask Dr. Chadwick to read a letter from Dr. S. Weir Mitchell.

LETTER FROM S. WEIR MITCHELL, M.D., LL.D.

PHILADELPHIA, December 29, 1900.

NOTHING, my dear Chadwick, except engagements, not to be broken, keeps me from being among those who in person congratulate the profession on the opening of your new library. To you more than to any other I send my gratulations, for to this end you have given costly days out of a busy life.

I see as I grow old, or may I say older, how few are the young medical men whose tastes are scholarly, and who, like Holmes and our own lamented Da Costa, are familiar with the fathers and find pleasure in the old books — the quaint books, the sense and the vagaries of the past. Without a great library few can afford these intellectual playgrounds, or, indeed, acquire the material for such indulgence.

May your new building and growing wealth of books tempt many into paths where some of us have found unlooked for treasures of interest and even of practical value; for indeed the dying century did not invent common sense, and genius is of every age.

I often remember with regret the great waste of time in my younger days when there were no great libraries, and when John Billings had not indexed the medical thought of all the centuries. The enormous labor then

involved in any mere literary research as to facts no one can imagine today. A great library of medicine is truly a labor-saving machine, and over your library and over its new home you should rejoice because a great library, well managed, practically lengthens life by saving time.

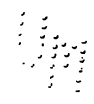
My thin thread of New England blood seems to be tingling with friendly pride as I reflect on what the profession has here accomplished. I send you my greeting from the city I love best to that I love next best, and wish you all, and the newly instituted library, long, useful and honored days.

As I pause to assure you how truly I am yours I am conscious that I really have more and better things to say; but as like as not others will have said them, and I leave therefore to the eloquence of suggestive imagination all the fine things which I am tempted to say and will not.

Believe me, my dear Chadwick, always and in all ways,

Your friend,

S. WEIR MITCHELL.



EDITORIAL.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL LIBRARY.¹

THE formal opening of the new building of the Boston Medical Library which took place Saturday evening, January 12th, was an event the full significance of which we are as yet not fully able to appreciate. Boston has for many years struggled to maintain a creditable library in a building which had become wholly inadequate and in a situation whose character had so changed as to justify its being not inaptly described by one of the speakers of the evening as a "diverticulum of hidden dangers, a Bohemian midway pleasance." To be suddenly transferred from this unfortunate position to its present location on one of the city's most attractive streets, commanding a view of exceptional beauty, is a transformation which the most sanguine believer in the fitness of things could contemplate only with satisfaction tempered by surprise. How this was accomplished was told in detail at the exercises attending the opening of the new building, the full report of which is given in other columns of this issue. We will only emphasize here the good fortune of the building committee in being able to command the devoted services of a medical colleague, Dr. Farrar Cobb, with large experience in the details of the construction of buildings for medical institutions; he, in great measure, wrought the miracle of providing an architectural product at less than estimated cost.

As was to be expected, the attendance at these exercises was large and representative; it is perhaps more worthy of comment that the various addresses and remarks made by the chosen speakers were most admirably suited to the occasion, and did not once lapse into the commonplace. They

¹ Editorial from the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, January 17, 1901.

were throughout dignified, at times humorous, but never tiresome. Dr. Wood, of Philadelphia, was the only absentee, but we have fortunately not thereby lost his address. The exercises were held in the large upper hall, as yet unfinished; its bare walls and girders were a mute but eloquent appeal to the assembled audience to provide at no distant time for the proper adornment of this important room, for which the modest sum of \$5,000 is required.

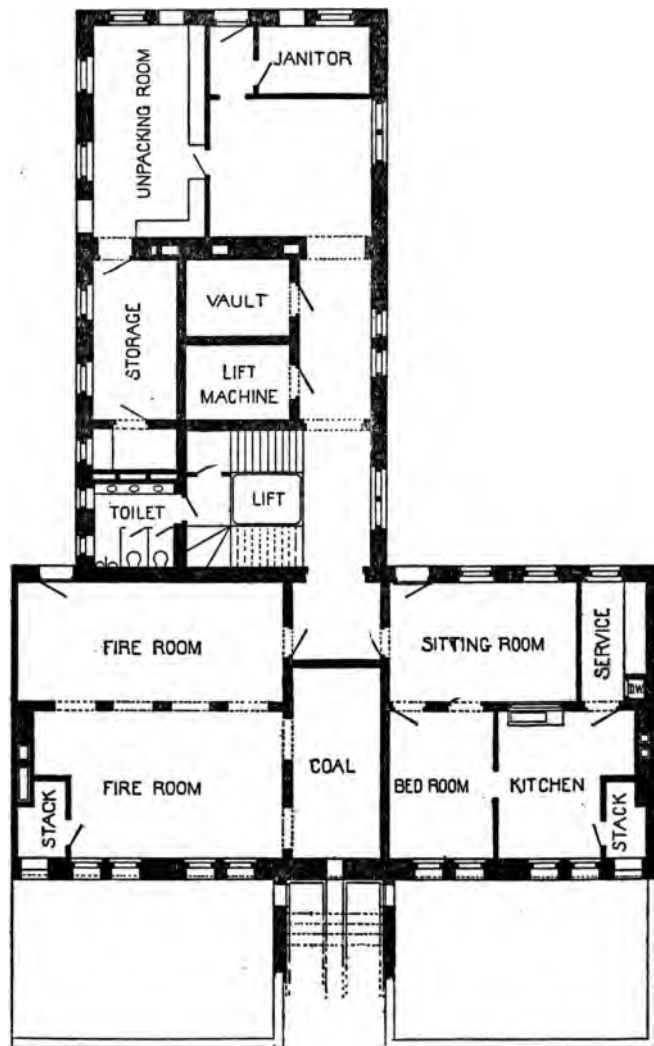
In striking contrast to this commodious but as yet incomplete hall is the main reading room, which is to be known as Holmes Hall, in honor of the steadfast friend and first president of the library. No doubt many deserve the credit for this room, but to whomsoever credit is due, there can be no question that it is a success from every point of view. Dr. Holmes is evidently the presiding genius, for his portrait looks down from one end and his bust from the other, while everywhere are further reminders of Boston's literary doctor—many of them due to the fostering foresight of Dr. Chadwick. It was hard to believe that this room had not been in use for years, so assiduously had its shelves been filled with books, and its various decorations completed. The recently acquired collection of medical medals presented by Dr. Storer will when finally in place afford a unique object of interest to Holmes Hall.

The skilful arrangement of the smaller rooms to be used for various purposes connected with the library—among them Sprague Hall, for the smaller meetings of medical societies—reflects equal credit upon the designers of the building. It is, in fact, hard to see how the most ambitious among us could demand a more elaborate and complete receptacle for our books and medical treasures of all sorts, or a more satisfactory literary workshop. Even Dr. Billings, who knows whereof he speaks, comforted us with the assurance that we “may rest satisfied for several weeks to come.”

True as all this is, and justifiable as are self-congratulations at this time on what has been so successfully accomplished, the fact must not for a moment be lost sight of that much more remains to be done; that with new privileges come new responsibilities of a very definite sort. The library must be supported as never before; it must continually have new books, and widen its scope of usefulness in every possible direction. To this end a renewed inter-

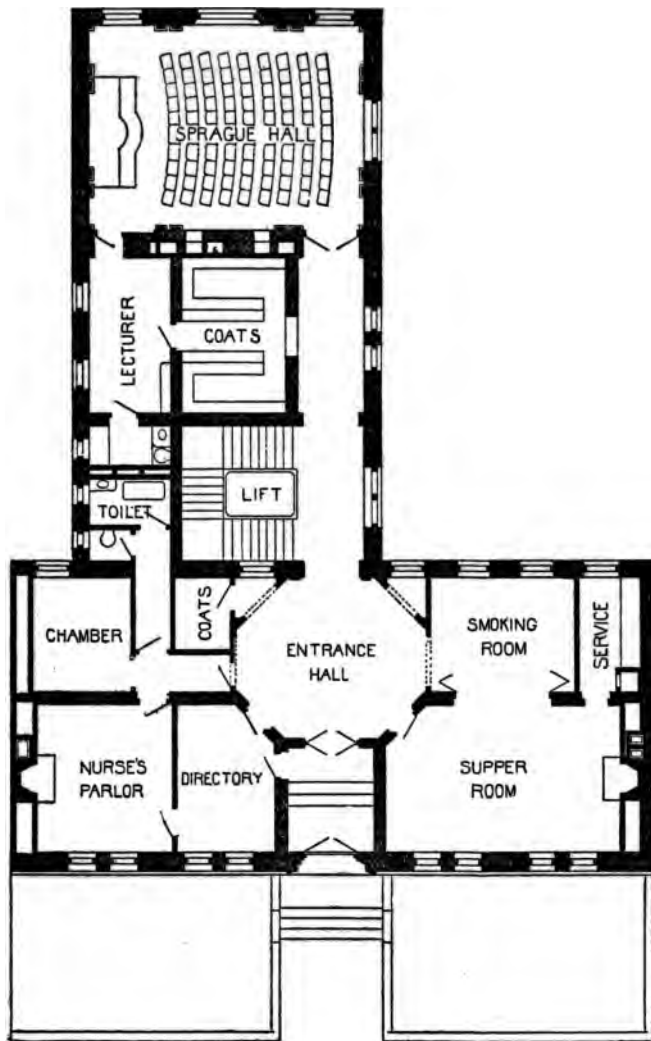
est must be taken in its affairs by every one, whether remotely or intimately connected with it, an interest which, no doubt, the new building will do much to stimulate.

A suggestion in this line was made both by Dr. Wood, speaking for the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and by Dr. Chadwick, Librarian of the Boston Library. Both of these gentlemen urged the desirability of widening the scope of the library with the view of establishing ultimately an association of physicians, whose voice would have weight in other matters than those pertaining merely to books. This means a very distinct expansion over the organization which at present exists. Dr. Chadwick urged that the library henceforth invite men working in allied fields to form a part of the proposed larger association, which then might properly assume the name and the obligations of an academy. The library should thereby become the real centre of the medical activity of the entire State, or we might go still further and say, of New England. It is clear, as Dr. Chadwick said, that the subject is a large one, demanding careful consideration and active enthusiasm before such a general plan may become an accomplished fact. In the meantime it behooves us to recognize our new responsibilities and by all ways in our power to enhance the usefulness of the library merely as a library, and also by broadening the present organization lay at least the foundation of an institution which shall represent the widest medical interests. We are confident that such a consummation is both possible and desirable.



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